

Rebuilding Greensburg, Kansas - Sustainable Long-Term Community Recovery Plan

EPA Region 7 - Kansas City, Kansas

Geographic location or area of activity: Greensburg, Kansas

Description of activity: On May 4, 2007, an EF-5 tornado estimated to be 1.7 miles wide with 205 mph winds struck the City of Greensburg and Kiowa County, Kan., killing 12 residents and damaging or destroying over 90% of the structures in the community.

In the aftermath of the storm, state and local elected officials stated their preference that Greensburg be rebuilt as the “greenest” community in Kansas. FEMA then asked EPA Region 7 to provide support in developing the “green” or sustainable portion of the Long-Term Community Recovery Plan they were producing. Region 7, along with other federal, state and local governments, private firms and a local not-for-profit, assisted FEMA in completing the plan in August 2007.



Commercial rebuilding underway

The sustainable portion of the Long-Term Community Recovery Plan contains the following projects:

1. Develop a local ordinance requiring that all new municipal buildings be designed to meet LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Development) Platinum standards.
2. Develop and implement a green home and business incentive-based certification program.
3. Rebuild the county recycling center.
4. Develop and operate a Center on Sustainability.
5. Develop and utilize a comprehensive sustainable master plan.

6. Utilize renewable sources of energy for the community.

All of these projects are currently being implemented in some manner. Region 7 has taken the lead in several of these projects. One component is the development of a green home program guide. Region 7 and Hathmore Technologies, LLC, an energy efficiency company located in Blue Springs, Mo., are working with other federal, state and local partners in developing the guide. This comprehensive document, when completed, will provide easy-to-understand guidance to both home buyers and home builders on building homes in a green manner. The program consists of over 40 separate criteria and three different performance levels. It enables a home buyer to choose from the simplest green building methods to the most complex.

In addition, Region 7 has been working with the Kiowa County, Sunflower Resource Conservation & Development Area (RC&D), and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to access available state resources to rebuild the Kiowa County recycling center which was located in Greensburg and destroyed in the storm.

Interagency partners: FEMA, DoE's National Renewable Energy Lab, the Kansas Housing Office, the Kansas Energy Office, USDA Rural Development, the Sunflower RC&D, and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment



Greensburg community design Charrette

Local partners: BNIM Architects, Greensburg Greentown, the City of Greensburg, Kiowa County, the American Institute of Architects – Kansas, and Hathmore Technologies

Activity URL: <http://www.epa.gov/region07/cleanup/greensburg/index.html>